



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

4600 Giant Springs Rd.
Great Falls, MT 59405
May 12, 2017

Dear Interested Party:

This letter is to notify you that I have made a decision regarding Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks' (MFWP) implementation of an agricultural lease renewal on a portion of the Beckman Wildlife Management Area (WMA). My decision is to move forward with the proposed action. The 103-acre agricultural lease will continue the use of agricultural fields for the benefit of wildlife and the lessee on that portion of the Beckman WMA as described in the Draft Environmental Assessment (EA).

There were no public comments received which addressed the proposed action. The enclosed Decision Notice stipulates my decision. No modifications have been made to the Draft EA after consideration of public input. Please consider your previous copy of the EA along with this Decision Notice as final.

It is my recommendation to move forward with the proposed agricultural lease renewal on a 103-acre portion of the Beckman WMA. A final decision will be made by the Montana Fish and Wildlife Commission at its meeting in June, 2017.

Thank you for your interest and involvement.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Gary Bertellotti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" and last name "Bertellotti" clearly legible.

Gary Bertellotti
Region 4 Supervisor
Montana Fish, Wildlife, & Parks
4600 Giant Springs Rd.
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5840
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Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

DECISION NOTICE
Beckman WMA Agricultural Lease
Region 4 Headquarters
4600 Giant Springs Rd.
Great Falls, MT 59405
(406) 454-5840

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED ACTION:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks (MFWP) proposes to renew an agricultural lease on 103 acres of the Beckman Wildlife Management Area (WMA) northeast of Denton, MT. This lease agreement would continue the use of haying and food-plot production as habitat management tools on the WMA.

MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) PUBLIC PROCESS AND COMMENT:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks is required by MEPA to assess potential impacts of its proposed actions to the human and physical environments, evaluate those impacts through an interdisciplinary approach, including public input, and make a decision based on this information. Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks released a Draft Environmental Assessment (EA) for public review of this proposal on April 14, 2017 and accepted public comment until 5:00 P.M. on May 12, 2017.

Notice of the proposal and availability of the Draft EA was published in the *Lewistown News-Argus* and *Great Falls Tribune*. Copies of the Draft EA were distributed to neighboring landowners and interested individuals, groups, and agencies to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project. The EA was available for public review on MFWP's website (<http://fwp.mt.gov/>, "Public Notices") from April 14, 2017 through May 12, 2017. An MFWP statewide news release was issued April 14, 2017 and posted on MFWP's website the same day.

SUMMARY OF PUBLIC COMMENT:

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks received zero comments on the proposed action.

DECISION NOTICE

Using the EA and public comment, a Decision Notice must be rendered by MFWP which addresses the concerns and issues identified for this proposed action. No adjustments or issues were identified.

Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks' analysis supports renewing the agricultural lease agreement for an additional six years.

I find there to be no significant impacts to the human and physical environments associated with this project. Therefore, I conclude that the EA is the appropriate level of analysis, and that an Environmental Impact Statement is not required.

After review of this proposal, it is my decision to accept the Draft EA as final, and to recommend the renewal of the agricultural lease on the Beckman WMA.

The Final EA may be viewed on MFWP's website, or be obtained upon request from MFWP's Region 4 Headquarters.

May12, 2017

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Bertellotti". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Gary" being more prominent and the last name "Bertellotti" following in a similar style.

Gary Bertellotti
Region 4 Supervisor

